



Holliday Lake 2003

Holliday Lake is a 145-acre impoundment owned and operated by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The lake is the focal point of a 250-acre park (Holliday Lake State Park) located in the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest. The lake is steep-sided and clear. There is a boat ramp providing anglers access to the lake as well as a hiking trail that provides bank fishing access. The fishery is managed with a 12-inch minimum length limit and five fish per day creel limit for largemouth bass. All other species are under general statewide fishing regulations.

Biologist with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries sampled Holliday Lake in 2002 to assess the health of the fishery. Target species included largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, black crappie and yellow perch. The largemouth bass fishery is in good condition with fish over 18 inches in the sample. Growth of largemouth bass at Holliday Lake is very good with fish reaching 12 inches by their third year of life. This is average for the Piedmont region and a good benchmark of the health of the population. Growth of bass slows somewhat beyond this age but there are still quality bass to be sought at this lake. The 2002 sample also indicates that numbers of bass are good at Holliday Lake with fish of all sizes well represented in the survey. There is ample opportunity to fish Holliday Lake and catch numerous fish and several over the minimum length limit.

Holliday Lake not only provides a quality bass fishery but also several of the “pan fish” species for those seeking a meal from their day of fishing. Bluegill numbers are down when compared to past surveys but the fishery still provides the potential to keep you and the kids busy. Quality bluegill over 8 inches are present though not exactly numerous. Redear sunfish and black crappie also inhabit Holliday Lake but their numbers are sparse. Any of these species can provide fun for all family members and are excellent species for the beginning angler.

A relative newcomer to the species mix at Holliday Lake is the yellow perch. This species was not introduced by the Department but has now become a viable fishery. In the past 4-5 years, the perch population has exploded and resulted in a reduction in numbers of sunfish due to competition. Most perch in the lake are less than five inches but fish as large as eight inches were observed in 2002. This species definitely provides anglers visiting Holliday Lake an opportunity to catch a species they may not be used to seeing in this area. Try live minnows or worms on this species and give them a taste too. Perch are among the best tasting freshwater species in this anglers opinion. The Department also encourages anglers to keep the perch that they catch to control numbers and allow sunfish species to recover somewhat from the yellow perch population explosion.

Overall, Holliday Lake provides a good fishery with a healthy bass population that can provide a brisk fishery and also the opportunity to hook some quality bass. The perch and sunfish fisheries provide ample opportunity for the angler looking for fillets

and will provide a fishery during all seasons of the year. Holliday Lake is restricted to electric motor or paddle only to enhance the experience of this beautiful park. The lake can be reached by following state route 626 east from route 24 (north of Appomattox). Follow route 626 until the turn-off on state route 723 that will take you to the lake. Signs are posted to assist visitors in finding the state park and boat launch facility.